

Conducting Inform and Influence Activities in the Decisive Action Training Environment

**LTC Kevin Spielman
Joint Multinational Readiness Center**

Over the past decade of conflict, the US Army has learned a lot about the importance of inform and influence activities (IIA). As the Army expands its training focus beyond Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom/New Dawn and utilizes the decisive action training environment (DATE) to train for future conflicts, leaders must ensure that effective tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) learned in the past are retained and are incorporated within the DATE. Brigade combat teams (BCT) operating in the DATE must be able to analyze the information environment, integrate IIA into staff activities, and proactively use IIA to generate effects in the operational environment (OE) in support of the commander's intent. This article addresses these factors, and provides TTPs that can be used to facilitate successful IIA.

Analysis of the Information Environment

In a DATE, key leaders and populace groups play an important role in the information environment (IE). BCT staffs must ensure they conduct a thorough analysis of all of the various leaders and groups within their areas of operation. This analysis is vital to effective IIA because it is difficult to inform and/or influence various target audiences if you do not understand who they are, what is important to them, and what type of environment they are living in. There are many good tools that BCT staffs can utilize in order to visualize the IE. One example is the PMESII-PT construct [political, military, economic, social, infrastructure, information-physical, time]. A way for BCT staffs to begin analyzing the information portion during mission analysis is to try to answer the following questions:

- Who are the relevant key leaders and populace groups?
- Which key leaders and populace groups are necessary to deliver elements of the end-state?
- What is their logic for action: perception of promise and risk?
- What communication is required to adjust perception?
- What is the right mix of means to communicate it?
- By whom?
- When?

BCT staffs should use a combined information overlay (CIO) as a part of IE analysis. The CIO graphically portrays the information environment in space (on a map). This helps staffs and commanders visualize where key information nodes are located, where critical information infrastructure is located, and most importantly how information moves throughout the OE.

Chapter 2 of Joint Publication (JP) 2-01.3, *Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment*, explains the CIO and provides a graphic example. This tool facilitates the BCT's situational understanding of how, where, and by what means information moves in the OE.

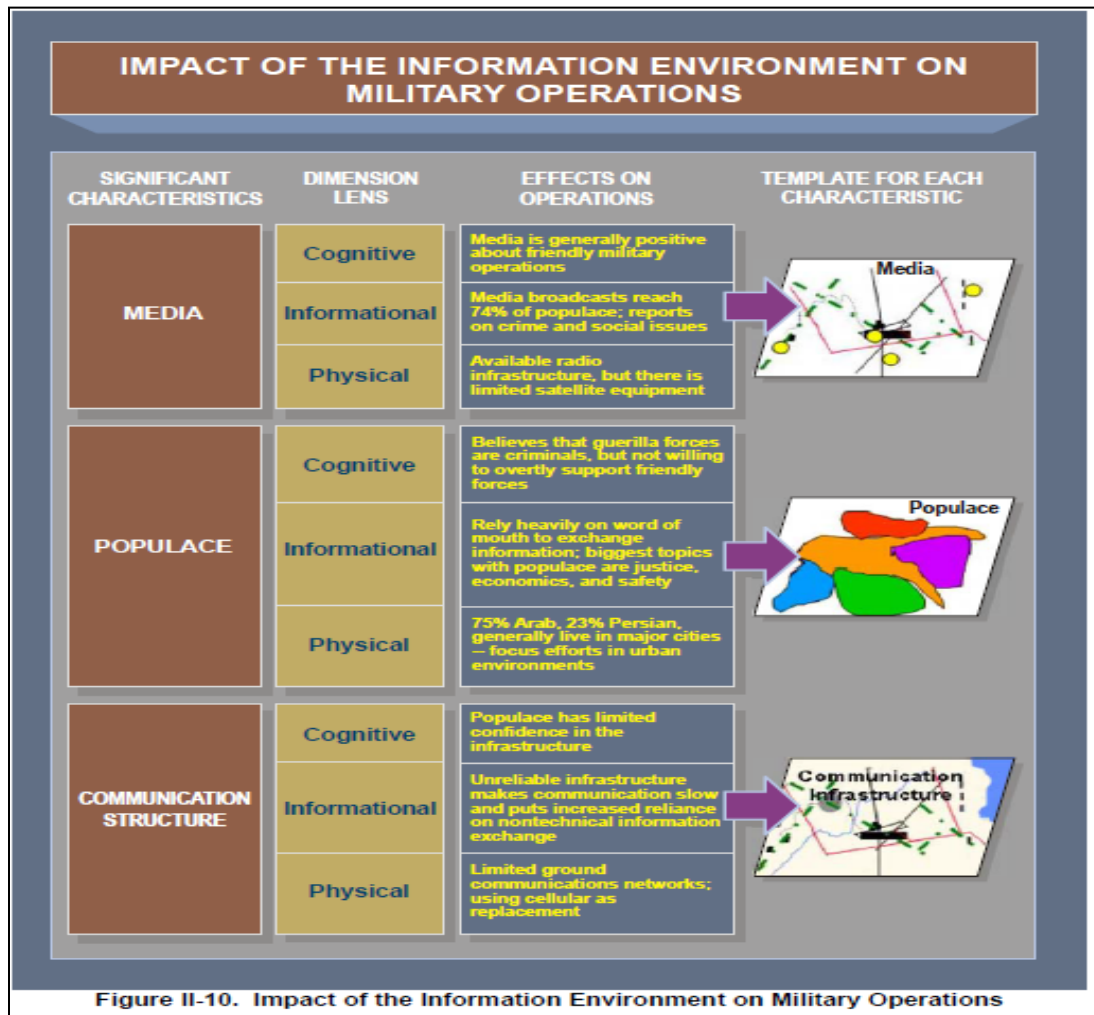


Figure 1. Characteristics and effects of the information environment from JP 2-01.3.

A unit's understanding of local populace sentiments is important for overall mission success. BCT's must have an understanding of the impact their operations are having on the local populace, and also must be aware of the impact various adversarial groups are having on the perceptions of the populace. A way BCT's can accomplish this is to develop a tracking mechanism for capturing populace sentiments. This tracking mechanism focuses on the beliefs and perceptions of the populace, which are crucial to developing effective IIA. This tool provides clarity on determining the following about the populace: who they are, what is important to them, and what type of messages, images, or issues are currently resonating with them.

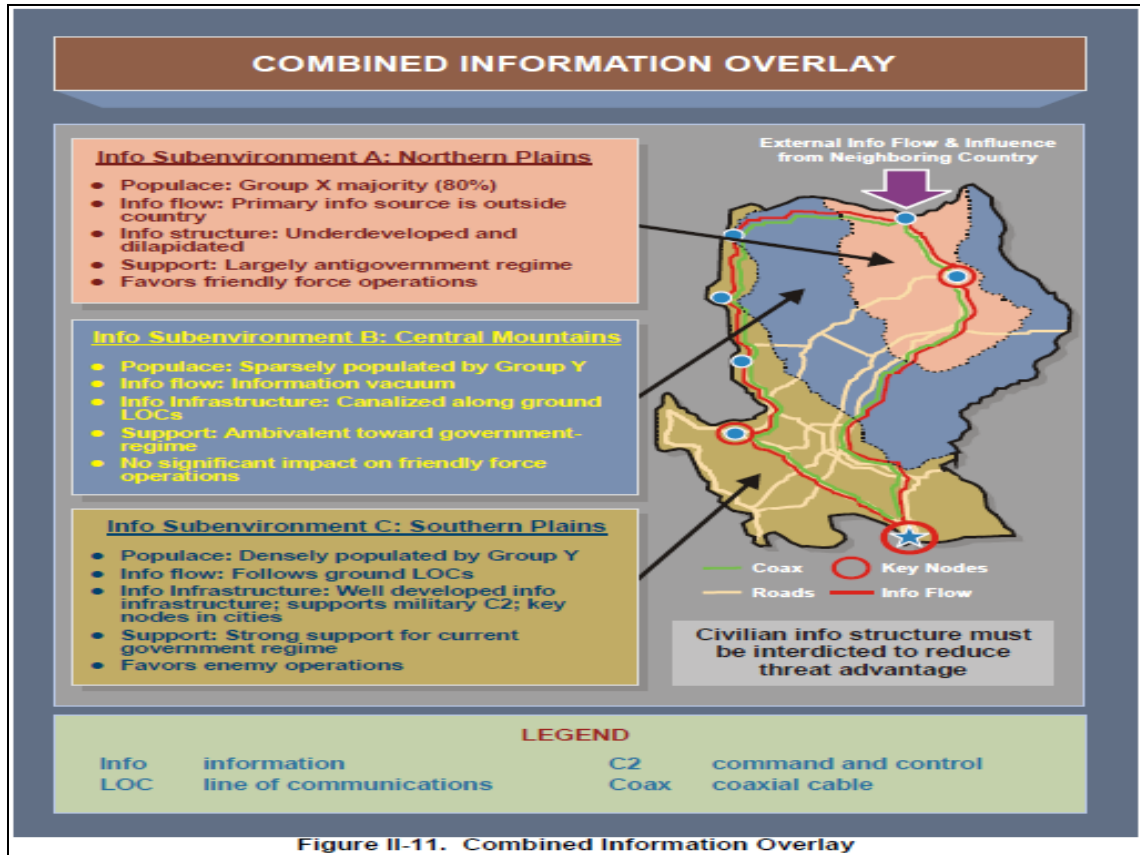


Figure 2. The CIO as described in JP 2-01.3.

A way to conduct populace sentiments tracking is to determine what factors are the most relevant to the populace, then conduct polling of the populace over a period of time in order to determine if their sentiments are becoming more or less supportive of the goals established by the unit's mission. Figure 3 shows an example of a way a unit can record and depict populace sentiments. This chart identifies what the populace thinks about certain factors. For example, in May and June populace sentiments are that acts of intimidation against the local government are significant and they are negatively affecting populace perceptions of their governments credibility.

POPULACE SENTIMENTS CHART		
FACTORS / TIMEFRAME	MAY	JUNE
Population movement from insecurity		
Enemy initiated attacks on government security forces		
Civilian casualties		
Acts of intimidation against government officials		
Effectiveness of adversary IIA		
Effectiveness of friendly forces IIA		

Figure 3. A way for units to record and depict populace sentiments.

GREEN: This factor is assessed as having a positive effect towards unit mission accomplishment.

AMBER: This factor is assessed as having both positive and negative effects towards unit mission accomplishment.

RED: This factor is assessed as having negative effects towards unit mission accomplishment.

Translating Staff Work into IIA

Conducting IIA in the DATE is a difficult undertaking. Multiple threats, a complex OE, and a robust information environment are just a few of the many factors which challenge the BCT staff and place a significant demand on the unit's time and resources. Operating in this environment places a premium on efficient and effective staff work. BCT staffs must learn how to effectively integrate IIA into staff activities in order to develop orders which ensure the right messages are sent to the right audience, at the right time, by the right asset.

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Example Working Group Quad Chart	
➤ "A Way" to synchronize IIA is thru a working group:	
<p>Purpose: Allow staff to prioritize and synchronize nonlethal operations and activities</p> <p>End state: Prioritized nominations and synchronized COA to serve as inputs into BCT targeting meeting</p> <p>Frequency: Once per targeting cycle</p> <p>Duration: 1 hour</p> <p>Location: BCT HQ</p>	<p>Staff Proponent: BCT S7</p> <p>Chair: DCO or XO</p> <p>Attendees / Representation: S2, S2X, S3, S4, S5, S9, SJA, PMO, PAO, targeting officer, chaplain, engineer, medical, cultural advisor, BN LNOs (If available): MISO detachment OIC, CA Company CDR (As needed): Interagency Reps, NGOs, SOF</p>
<p>Possible Inputs: Can be consolidated and sent up to 24 hours before meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Targeting objectives / tasks• Intelligence update• Maneuver concept of operations• Assessments• Running estimates• External organization updates• Target nominations <p>Possible Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritized nonlethal target nominations / TSM• Prioritized nonlethal HPTL• Proposed CCIR changes• Updated themes and messages• Revised nonlethal target folders• Proposed FRAGO injects	<p>Agenda Example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of Commander's intent• Review targeting objectives / tasks• Current CCIR with decision points• Previous due outs• AO update• Future operations• Planning guidance• Prioritize nonlethal target nominations / COA / TSM• Prioritize nonlethal HPTL• Propose changes to CCIR and / or decision points• Propose changes to themes, messages, and talking points• Review due outs or coordination requirements
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Figure 4. Sample quad chart for nonlethal working groups to synchronize IA.

Units accomplish IIA related staff work thru the targeting process or the military decision making process (MDMP). One technique that can ensure this process runs smoothly is for staff leads to use a working group quad chart. The targeting process can quickly derail if brigade staffs do not adhere to a prescribed meeting format and structure. The meeting quad chart is an

effective tool in maintaining the purpose and ensuring the meeting gets to the desired outputs. Staffs should review the quad chart at the beginning and the end of the meeting. The final quad chart review should focus on whether or not the meeting produced the outputs needed to continue the targeting process. Figure 5 shows an example of a working group quad chart for a IIA or non-lethal working group. This chart should be referenced frequently throughout the course of the meeting in order to ensure the meeting maintains its focus and produces the necessary outputs.

To improve analysis during MDMP, BCT staffs (especially BCT S7's) should incorporate the use of the Quick Reference to information operations (IO) input to MDMP. This quick reference guide can be found in Appendix A to Field Manual (FM) 3-13, Information Operations Doctrine, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (dated November 2003). This version of FM 3-13 is currently being revised with respect to IIA. Until the new FM 3-13 (IIA) gets published, the quick reference guide remains a detailed resource which provides a unit good insight on what IIA related actions should be considered and/or performed during MDMP.

Appendix A			
Quick Reference to IO Input to the MDMP			
This appendix lists the IO planning actions and IO products associated with each task and subtask of the military decisionmaking process. It includes the sources of information needed for each task. Refer to chapter 5 for details. Refer to appendix B for a scenario and examples of corps-level IO products. Refer to appendix C for an example of an IO estimate. Refer to appendix D for an example of an IO annex.			
MDMP Task	Information Sources (Inputs)	G-7 Actions	G-7 Products
Receipt of Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher HQ OPLAN/ OPORD or deduced mission (figure B-2, page B-3) Commander's initial guidance (figure B-3, page B-5) IO estimate (appendix C) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in commander's initial assessment Receive the commander's initial guidance (figure B-3, page B-5) Perform an initial IO assessment Prepare for subsequent planning Allocate time to perform tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Input to initial IPB, including initial EEFI (OP-SEC) Input to initial ISR tasking (IO IRs); include IO IRs concerning adversary capability to collect EEFI (OPSEC) Submit IO IRs concerning adversary capability to collect EEFI to G-2 (OP-SEC) IO input to first WARN0; input includes initial EEFI (figure B-4, page B-6) Recommend initial EEFI to G-2 & G-3 (OP-SEC) Assemble DWG; begin MD mission analysis (MD) Update IO estimate Allocate available time

Figure 5. Quick reference guide to IO input from Appendix A, FM 3-13.

In both the targeting process and MDMP the ultimate goal is to produce clear, synchronized orders and to develop refined talking points for use in IIA. Orders must be clear, synchronized, and specific to ensure the right messages are sent to the right audience, at the right time, by the right asset. Utilizing the Decide, Detect, Deliver, and Assess (D3A) methodology in FM 3-60, *The Targeting Process*, will help staffs synchronize and refine IIA targeting. Developing the assessment portion of D3A assists BCT staffs in determining the overall effects the unit is trying to achieve. Understanding the effects you want to achieve facilitates more specific targeting actions, and talking points that are designed to be delivered to specific individuals or groups, as opposed to a general category (i.e. the populace). BCT staffs should use the D3A methodology to ensure specific orders are published, and effective IIA is conducted on the ground by the unit.

Generating IIA Effects in the Operational Environment

Operations over the last decade have taught the US Army many lessons on the impacts of significant events in the information environment. As a force, we continue to make improvements in our procedures to respond to events with exploitation and/or consequence management type activities. Units operating in a DATE can expect their IIA to be tested when it comes to properly responding to significant events. Typically, unit battle drills are the main response, and these battle drills are normally developed to the point of the immediate actions that need to be taken. Good TTP to use to respond to significant events is to account for the longer term actions that need to be taken. BCT staffs should look beyond the immediate actions of the battle drill and categorize time frames which IIA activities should be performed. For example, utilize categories such as:

- Immediate (IIA in next 24 hours).
- Short term response (IIA from 24 hours to 96 hours or next 3 days).
- Midterm response (IIA over the next two weeks).
- Long term response (IIA over the next 30 days and beyond).

Using categorized time frames will enable the BCT staff to analyze the OE beyond the immediate situation, and will help the unit develop IIA over the course of time that will better serve the unit in achieving the desired IIA effects in the OE.

IIA are an important part of US Army operations. Many lessons have been learned over the past decade of conflict, and the Army continues to refine its TTP for IIA. As BCT's operate in the DATE they must be able to analyze the information environment, integrate IIA into staff activities, and proactively use IIA to generate effects in the OE. This article addresses these factors, and provides respective TTP. BCT staffs should evaluate how they are currently conducting IIA, and consider use of these TTP to improve their overall performance.

Acronyms used in Figures 4 and 5:

AO- Area of Operation
BN- Battalion
CA- Civil Affairs
CCIR- Commander's Critical Information Requirements
CDR- Commander
COA- Course of Action
DCO- Deputy Commanding Officer
DWG- deception Working Group
EEFI- Essential Elements of Friendly Information
FRAGO- Fragmentary Order
HPTL- High Payoff Target List
HQ- Headquarters
IPB- Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield
IR- Information Request
LNO- Liaison Officer
MD- Military Deception
MISO- Military Information Support Operations
NGO- Non-Governmental Organization
OIC- Officer in Charge
OPLAN- Operation Plan
OPORD- Operation Order
OPSEC- Operations Security
PAO- Public Affairs Officer
PMO- Provost Marshal
SJA- Staff Judge Advocate
SOF- Special Operations Forces
TSM- Target Synchronization Matrix
XO- Executive Officer